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# LARRY CRAIG

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NEWS RELEASE

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Dan Whiting (202) 224-8078

Sid Smith (208) 342-7985

## **CRAIG CALLS FOR RAILROAD CUSTOMER EQUITY**

**Senate bill would require competitive rates and practices from railroads**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Once again, Idaho Senator Larry Craig has joined colleagues from both sides of the aisle in introducing legislation to mandate competition among railroads. The bill was introduced by Senators Craig, Rockefeller, D-W.V., Dorgan, D-N.D., and Vitter, R-La.

In the 1980s, Congress enacted legislation deregulating the railroads, but putting into place safeguards to ensure that customers who don't have access to multiple transportation options aren't left powerless to fight abuses. Enforcement of these safeguards currently rests with the Surface Transportation Board (STB), which has been negligent in curbing railroad monopoly abuses.

Craig emphasized the need for competition and this legislation, "As consumers, most of us enjoy choice and competition in our shipping options. If I want to send a package to a friend, I can go to the post office, UPS, FedEx, and a number of other providers. Most railroad customers, though, don't have the same options – and their problem has a much larger scale. Without competition, you are subject to the whims of one provider. That drives up prices, which results in fewer jobs, higher prices, and a reduced ability to compete in a global marketplace. This bill will shift the balance in favor of market-based pricing and require that railroads justify their rates in states like Idaho."

The legislation will:

- Ensure rail customer access to rail competition
- Ensure a workable rate challenge process at the STB for rail customers without access to transportation competition
- Ensure a proactive STB
- Clarify and enforce the railroads' obligation to serve their customers

A section-by-section summary of the bill is available at <http://craig.senate.gov>.